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UCD Multitheater Show Will Include Tiny Star

A number of professional, nonstudent performers are announced for a joint stage presentation of the drama, art and music departments at University at California, Davis. The multitheater show is entitled "Out Our Way: A Kultural Extravaganza With Music."

Heading the performance lineup is Billy Barty, one of the more famous "little persons" of the world. The three-foot, nine-inch Barty has been in 120 films and a number of television series. He is being flown in from Los Angeles for the show, set for Wednesday through May 13 at 8:15 PM in the campus Main Theater. Barty is a singer, dancer, drummer, impersonator and comic. He will work with the students.

Other performers: Bodie Chicken, billed as a "200-pound fowl who sings protest songs against 'finger lickers' while wailing an old blues song"; David Wright, who tap dances on roller skates while twirling a baton and who was on the Ted Mack show for 10 weeks; the "Chicago Bombshell," Lana, a lead dancer with a senior citizens group, the Senior Swingers, who also will be on hand; Little Roger and the Goose Bumps in original music; "a 70-year-old 'Tiny Tim'"; a black dance company, The Creators; Jay Gottlieb, who has appeared on the Mike Douglas TV show, who will play his prized saw, given to him by Sophie Tucker before she

died; an electronic orchestra, The Touch a Sutra, with a Moog synthesizer; and Harold Webb and his



Billy Barty

black theater group. Also there will be flambe dinners prepared during the performance, and a 50-foot long, nine-foot high aluminum, movable train track sculpture by Jerry Johnston "with 10,000 bricks," according to UCD, which has tickets for the show. William T. Wiley and Dan Snyder are the directors.

Bee Photo



Little Person Problem

Adele "Twinkles" Chambordon of Birmingham, Ala., demonstrates one problem little people face in a society built with big people in mind as she stands on a stool to reach a pay phone in a hotel lobby. Delegates from all over the country are attending the 15th annual convention of Little People in America in Oakland. The discussions center around the ideas and solutions to problems faced by little people.

UPI photo

Hollywood briefs

Feb., '78

Barty's 121st film

United Press International

HOLLYWOOD — Midget Billy Barty will play the role of a door-to-door Bible salesman in Paramount Pictures' "Foul Play," starring Burgess Meredith, Dudley Moore and Rachel Roberts. The comedy-thriller marks the 121st role for Barty who made his movie debut at age 5 in 1923.

Helping the Little People

Since early childhood, Erick Carstensen, 14, has suffered because of his stature: he is a victim of hereditary dwarfism. Erick's contemporaries, who generally towered over him, excluded him from their games. Teachers were often equally unsympathetic, calling him "Shorty" and browbeating him for his inability to keep up with his classmates in physical education. Even the doctors consulted by his parents provided little in the way of relief. Accord-

TIME, MAY 7, 1973

MEDICINE



U.C.L.A.'S RIMOIN WITH PATIENTS
Not all are alike.

ing to Erick's mother, Mrs. Dorothy Carstensen of Los Angeles: "They'd all say the same thing: 'Don't worry about it. He'll shoot up overnight.'"

Erick has indeed been growing at a faster rate than most of the other 50,000 dwarfs in the U.S. have experienced. But that is only because he has had expert medical help; six months ago, his mother enrolled him in the dwarf clinic operated by the University of California at Los Angeles, the only facility in the world devoted exclusively to the treatment and study of dwarfism. There, twice a week, he receives an injection of a pituitary hormone, the primary substance that triggers human growth. He has grown 2½ in. (to 4 ft. 10 in.) since treatment was started, and the clinic doctors are confident that he will now reach a height of at least five feet.

Short Supply. The dwarf clinic, now marking its second anniversary, is the creation of Dr. David Rimoin, a U.C.L.A. geneticist and one of the world's leading authorities on dwarfism. Rimoin believes that the condition (which occurs once in every 10,000 births in the U.S.) is almost universally misunderstood, largely because so few doctors have taken the trouble to learn about it. Says he: "To most doctors, all dwarfs look alike."

Most doctors might see only one dwarf professionally during their careers; Rimoin's clinic, located at Los Angeles' Harbor General Hospital and staffed by ten physicians, sees 500 a year. Rimoin and his colleagues can now identify at least 50 types of dwarfism, and have determined the causes of many of these abnormalities. Midg-

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ets, who are tiny but normally proportioned, are usually victims of an underactive pituitary gland, a pea-sized organ at the base of the brain that is largely responsible for the secretion of growth hormone (HGH). Other dwarfs, who tend to have normal-sized heads and trunks but extremely short arms and legs, usually have different hormone deficiencies.

Like Erick, most midgets, or pituitary dwarfs, can be helped to achieve near-normal growth through injections of HGH. But while efforts are under way to synthesize the substance in large amounts, HGH can now be obtained only from the pituitaries of human cadavers, which are in short supply. Rimoin estimates that 25% of the midget population could be helped by hormone therapy; at present, only 10% are able to obtain treatment.

Heaven Sent. The Los Angeles clinic also deals with many of the other problems connected with dwarfism. Some dwarfs have severe spinal defects that can lead to paralysis if not promptly treated. Others suffer from deteriorating vision and a wide variety of orthopedic problems that most doctors cannot correctly diagnose or treat. Mrs. Estrella Sberna of Los Angeles took her daughter Mary Lou, 12, to dozens of different doctors for problems ranging from a cleft palate to flat feet. But it was only at the clinic that Mary Lou began to receive proper treatment after doctors diagnosed her condition as Kniest syndrome, a type of dwarfism in which the cartilage is dotted with holes.

Actor Michael Dunn, 38, who is best known for his performance in the film *Ship of Fools*, consulted several specialists in search of a cure for the arthritis he feared might force him to give up show business. He finally found help at the clinic, where surgeons operated to tighten his knee ligaments and reduce the pain in his legs. That surgery, says Dunn, saved his career.

Others credit the clinic with preserving their sanity. Los Angeles Housewife Shirley Figone, who is normal sized, was upset about her dwarf son Chris, 2, until Rimoin arranged for her to meet a dwarf couple with the opposite problem—their normal-sized daughter was embarrassed by them. The meeting helped breach the isolation that so often surrounds dwarfs and their families. "We're saving a scrapbook for Chris, cutting out any newspaper stories we can find concerning little people," says Mrs. Figone. "We want him to know that he's not alone."

Rimoin believes that most dwarfs can be helped, physically and mentally. Indeed, he says, even Tom Thumb, the midget exhibited and exploited by Circus Impresario P.T. Barnum, could have achieved near-normal growth had treatment been available 100 years ago. But with that treatment, Rimoin admits, Tom would probably never have become rich and famous.

TIME, MAY 7, 1973

WOMAN'S DAY/SEPTEMBER 1, 1978

LITTLE PEOPLE, BIG PROBLEMS

About a hundred thousand Americans are dwarfs, or little people (a designation they prefer), who reach an adult height of four feet ten inches or less. There are over a hundred different types of short-stature conditions whose causes range from abnormal genes to malnutrition. It is important to diagnose these conditions early since they may present a variety of medical and social problems. Some little people are prone to ear infections that can lead to hearing loss or to abnormal bone development that may result in crippling. All may face discrimination. While specialists across the country are helping victims of dwarfism, a division of the Moore Clinic at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore offers medical care and counseling for the range of their problems. Little people can get information about these services by writing the physician in charge of the Clinic, Dr. Edmond Murphy, at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Md. 21205.

*Time Magazine
May 7, 1973*

Dwarfs Hold a Convention

San Francisco Chronicle
★★ Tues., July 24, 1973

Little People Gather

In the lobby of the Hilton Inn at the Oakland Airport yesterday a white telephone sat on a stand two feet high with a sign that said, "Little People's House Phone."

Against the wall by the elevator stood a stick — to be used to push the button.

In the bathroom of many rooms there was a tool to reach the wash basin, and the towels were draped over special low racks.

For the Little People of America, Inc., was holding its 15th annual convention, with about 300 delegate dwarfs headed by Joe Alexander of Goldendale, Wash.

DWARFS

"We're dwarfs, not midgets," said Billy Barty of Hollywood, the movie and television actor who founded LPA in 1957. "Midgets are circus freaks."

(Technically, midgets are dwarfs who are perfectly proportioned. There are 55 types of dwarfism, which is a physical characteristic unrelated to mental ability.)

Barty, a stocky 3 feet 9½ inches, has appeared in 120 films — 75 of them during the '30s, as Mickey Rooney's brother.

VIEW

He sees a change in the attitude of big people toward dwarfs in the past few years — largely, he feels through media coverage of LPA conventions around the country.



Photos by Jerry Telfer

ANNIS ARTHUR (LEFT) TALKED TO LES KRIMS
He's a photographer working on a book about the little people

"But we've still got a long way to go," he said. "Parents unwittingly — maybe wittingly sometimes — instill this freakish attitude in children. There's even a popular children's book with the definition: 'Dwarf — a mean, nasty little man seen

in fairy tales.'

"I was in Reno a while back and a woman threatnede her child: 'Stop that crying or I'll have that little man bite you.'

"I went up to the little girl and said, 'Honey, it's not me you have to worry about —

it's her.'" **PROBLEM**

What was his most aggravating problem as a dwarf?

Barty replied straight-faced: "Not getting a dramatic lead opposite Elizabeth Taylor."

A more common cause for annoyance is such architectural details as light switches or door knobs — inches beyond fingertips, reachable only if the dwarf stands on tiptoe.

"I was at Kennedy Airport and ran all over the place and couldn't find a phone in a single booth I could reach," he said. "I had to ask a big person to put my dime in and dial for me."

HOPE

Dr. Victor McKusick, head of the department of medicine at Johns Hopkins University, was the speaker at yesterday's luncheon.

He said the best hope at present for a remedy for a prevalent type of dwarfism — that caused by a deficiency in growth hormones — lies in the work of Dr. C. H. Li, University of California Medical Center biochemist, who synthesized the hormone in 1971.

Its eventual manufacture will make the hormone available to children afflicted with dwarfism.

"A little person can happen to anyone," Barty reminded newsmen. "Little people come from big people."



ADELE (TWINKLES) CHAMBORDON
A platform to reach the telephone

Little People Mini Ones Like Maxi Tog Styles

OAKLAND (AP) — Annis Arthur is a pert blonde 22-year-old who says that despite her 3-foot, 5-inch stature she sometimes dates lanky basketball players.

After a boost onto the couch, she smoothed out her green-blue halter top and maxi skirt, handmade for the Little People of America fashion show.

"I have no preference about dating someone tall or little. You can get someone to accept you for your mind and not your size," said Miss Arthur, of Chapel Hill, N.C.

She said the fashion show is important to dwarfs because they have difficulty getting clothes to fit.

The show, part of the organization's 15th annual convention this week, featured homemade, altered and store purchased categories.

"The fashion show is an inspiration because we can see what each other can do," said Miss Arthur, who is studying for a master's degree of social work at the University of Maryland and plans to work at Johns Hopkins University as a psychiatric counselor for little people.

Shirley Rosenberg, a 44-year-old North Hollywood, Calif., matron, said that at 54 inches she is considered tall by organization members.

She said clothing can be a trial for dwarfs because "we like to be as faddy as everyone else."

She said today's flexibility in lengths and styles have been a boon to the little people. She noted pants tops they can convert to long dresses and the mini-skirt. "The problem is getting clothes that don't look long can you wear Buster childish," she said. "How Browns?"

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1973

Problems of Dwarfs In an Oversized World Gain More Attention

* * *
'Little People of America' Fight
Job Bias, Social Ostracism,
Out-of-Reach Public Facilities.

By JOANN S. LUBLIN

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

OAKLAND, Calif. — John Strudwick, Lee Kitchens and Harriet Stickney have spent their lives adjusting to a world that is the wrong size.

They are dwarfs, and for them and all other people of abnormally small stature, the simplest of daily tasks can be infuriatingly difficult. Out-of-reach elevator buttons, public telephones and closet racks present frustrating obstacles unknown to average-sized adults.

Far worse, however, is the struggle against parental overprotection, social ostracism and job discrimination that is painfully familiar to nearly everyone who shares this handicap. Until Mr. Kitchens was 16, for example, his mother insisted on helping him cross the street. Mr. Strudwick was turned down by 14 girls before he got a date for his high school senior prom. And although she had a master's degree and eight years' teaching experience in her hometown of Sheboygan, Wis., Mrs. Stickney couldn't find a job when she moved to suburban Milwaukee.

Power to the Little People

Today, however, most of the painful times are behind them. Like many of the nation's estimated 100,000 dwarfs, they are showing new determination to overturn long-standing barriers of discrimination and ignorance and to win broader acceptance in society. Especially vocal in demanding increased recognition for the unique problems of dwarfs is a national organization called Little People of America Inc. Movie actor Billy Barty, a dwarf, founded the group in 1957 to educate the public and help dwarfs overcome their social, medical and physical problems.

While dwarfs organize for mutual support and self-help, medical researchers are taking a renewed interest in treating and preventing dwarfism. The promise of normal growth can still be offered to only a few, but scientists believe they are on the threshold of dramatic gains.

There are two major types of dwarfism, arbitrarily defined as adult height of under four feet 10 inches. Disproportionate dwarfs have short limbs, but their heads and trunks are normal. Proportionate dwarfs, commonly called midgets, look like average-sized people in miniature. In nearly all cases, dwarfism affects only physical appearances, not intelligence.

At the Little People's 15th national convention here this summer, 300 of the group's 2,068 members consulted with medical geneticists and talked about how to survive as "little people," as they call themselves.

Fending for Themselves

Most members have adapted remarkably well to the physical frustrations of their size. Many, afraid of being thought helpless or "crippled," exhibit a plucky independence. Mrs. Stickney, who is four-feet-two-inches tall, says she sometimes climbs right into the frozen-food compartments at grocery stores to reach the orange juice. And Lee Kitchens, now a successful engineer with Texas Instruments Inc., carries a collapsible accelerator pedal extension in his briefcase that he fits on the rented cars he drives on business trips. A similar device enables him to pilot his own plane.

In an effort to make their physical environment more convenient, the Little People of America has recently joined forces with other organizations, such as the California Association of the Physically Handicapped. This group has successfully lobbied for state laws requiring lower pay phones, curbside ramps and railings in public toilets—all to benefit people confined to wheelchairs. Richard Wooten, president of the association, told the Little People's convention that dwarfs and people in wheelchairs "share a common problem—the height of things."

The handicap of short stature gives employers a good excuse to refuse to hire dwarfs. "It's all too easy for a potential employer to look at a four-foot-two adult and say, 'Oh my gosh, that person can't handle a job,'" Mrs. Stickney complains. School superintendents in Milwaukee doubted that she could discipline a class. "They wouldn't touch me with a 10-foot pole," she recalls. "They weren't sure how their public would react."

Another dwarf with a Ph.D. in chemistry was turned down for a research job by several major drug firms on the ground that he wouldn't be able to reach the laboratory instruments. His would-be employers ignored the fact that he had managed well enough in the laboratory to get his doctorate.

Plumbers and "Little Oscars"

Of course, some dwarfs take advantage of their size and work as entertainers. Mr. Barty, for example, has appeared in 120 movies. Others become sales promotional representatives for firms like Oscar Mayer & Co., a Madison, Wis., meat packer that uses five midgets as "Little Oscars."

Some little people even hold physically demanding jobs. Rick LaRussa, a plumber, says customers are shocked when he appears at their door. "They tell me, 'I called a plumber, not a two-foot-two midget,'" he says. (The 26-year-old San Franciscan is actually four-feet-three.) With the aid of a stepladder, he says, "I

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Wall Street Journal



Joy Campbell fits right in at secretarial school.

Little Gal—Tall Goals

Joy Finds Advantages in Being Small

By LORETTA NOFFSINGER

Staff Writer

Joy Campbell tackles the big things in life.

At 22, and only 3 feet 8, she has backpacked through Europe, toured the Bahamas and worked in the cast of the kids' shows, H.R. Pufnstuf, Bugaloos and Lidsville.

But the Esparto resident, a dwarf with tall sights, believes this is only the beginning.

Her long-time goal has been to work as an executive secretary, and she commutes on weekdays to attend Heald Business College in Sacramento.

"I have wanted to be a secretary since I was in the third grade," Miss Campbell said. "I used to watch 77 Sunset Strip on television. The secretaries had it so good, I thought, this is it."

Miss Campbell said she already has many of the qualities necessary to become a secretary. She was delegated typing and office jobs throughout high school and is adept at dealing with people.

The hazel-eyed blonde credits the latter ability to working in Hollywood and having great parents.

"I have a great family. We did everything together," she said, noting she was the middle child of five children. "I have always referred to my brother, who is 5 feet 8, as my little brother." Another brother, she said, is about 6 feet.

Miss Campbell said despite the family size, she learned to be independent.

"My mother figured I would have to go through life like anybody else," she said. "I think my parents really had the right idea. I am very independent. I do not like to be depend-

ent on anybody because it's a very bad habit.

"If I am going to be able to handle everything that comes along, I am going to have to get it together. I take everything for what it is. There are rotten things in life, but there are so many tremendous things."

Some of the tremendous things have been backpacking through Europe and working in Hollywood.

"Two years ago I backpacked to Europe," she said. "I carried a backpack, camera and maxicoat." The six-week tour included France, Spain, Germany, Great Britain and Scotland.

Miss Campbell answered an ad in Little People's Newsletter for the television roles. She left before her class was to be graduated from Esparto High School in 1969, but flew back to Northern California to be salutatorian in the ceremony.

"I went down there when I was 18," she said. "I knew only one person there."

"It was fun. The money was fabulous and it was a chance to live in Los Angeles."

Before attending business college, Miss Campbell worked as a secretary in Woodland for a water softening company. She has been living at home for 1½ years since leaving Hollywood.

"There was some adjustment in coming back—having to turn my stereo down," she laughed.

But Miss Campbell has never had to adjust to being smaller than other persons.

"I haven't known anything else but being 3 feet 8," she said. "It's kind of a novelty, being small. People automatically know who I am. I am not one of the 5 feet 7 girls."

Problems of Dwarfs Gain Attention As They Fight Job Bias, Ostracism

Continued From First Page

can do anything a normal-sized plumber can, except lift a heavy pipe or a 200-pound bathtub."

Employers are often less concerned by the physical strain of the work than they are about the reactions of co-workers. "Social acceptance is the greatest problem for a little person in getting a job," says Ron Kaminiski, the head of the San Francisco office of California's Department of Rehabilitation.

Social difficulties often begin early in life, when parents become aware of their child's birth defect. "Parents go through a period of mourning at first for the loss of their perfect child," says Joan Weiss, a social worker for the Moore Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, the nation's leading dwarfism research center.

Once they've accepted their child's dwarfism, some parents become overly protective. Mr. Kitchens reacted to such treatment by developing a strong streak of independence. "My parents wouldn't let me drive a car in high school," he says, "so I went to college, earned enough money to buy my own car and taught myself to drive with pedal attachments."

Many dwarf children quickly learn how to cope with being taunted and "babied" by their schoolmates. One dwarf in the fifth grade who was persistently teased finally replied, "Don't you know? My mother puts me in the dryer every night." And when a fourth-grader grew weary of being carried around the playground "like a big living doll," her mother says, she began kicking anyone who tried.

Few children are prepared for what many little people say is the worst crisis: dating and finding a mate. "They probably go through five times the agony all teens go through," observes Miss Weiss. In John Strudwick's case, one girl who turned down his prom invitation told him, "Well, why don't you run around with your own kind?" He says now: "That wasn't easy, since I was the only dwarf at my school." Another girl told him, "Little people of America ought to set up a segregated community of Lilliputian-sized people." Mr. Strudwick, who stands four-feet-four-inches tall, weathered these hurts and went on to win election as student body president of Wesley Junior College in Dover, Del., last spring. He wants to go into politics some day "after all the old wives' tales about dwarfs are done away with."

Mindful of its members' dating problems, Little People of America provides a busy social schedule so that dwarfs can meet members of the opposite sex who are their own size. "It was nice to go to a national convention, ask a girl to dance and not have to look up at her for

a change," Mr. LaRussa says. Overnight romances bloom during the convention. ("Did you hear about the saxophone player?" gushes one dwarf woman to another. "He got engaged on the boat trip this week.") Mr. Barty guesses that 75% of the married couples in LPA met through the organization.

Eventually, medical science may see to it that fewer dwarfs face such adjustment problems. Some dwarf children can already be cured, and the prospect is good that many more will achieve average height in years to come.

Since 1965, the Moore Clinic has treated some 1,500 dwarfs for special medical problems such as premature arthritis and bow-leggedness. Clinic doctors try to isolate the cause of each patient's handicap from the more than 70 possible causes of dwarfism. These range from hormonal failure and defective genes to bone diseases and inadequate nutrition. An accurate diagnosis is important in family planning, as it can determine whether the condition will be passed on to a dwarf's children. (Not all types of dwarfism are inherited.) And, if made early enough, the diagnosis can sometimes lead to a cure.

Over the past 10 years, some 2,000 midget children have been able to grow as tall as five-feet-four after being injected with Human Growth Hormone, or HGH, which is secreted by the pituitary, a pea-sized gland located beneath the base of the brain. These midgets, whose short stature is caused by an underactive pituitary, receive HGH extracted from cadavers' pituitaries. Each child requires the extracts from about 100 pituitaries each year, and doctors estimate another 8,000 midget children in the past decade could have been helped had there been enough HGH to go around. Adult dwarfs have reached full maturity and therefore can't be treated.

The hormone has been synthesized and it appears likely that large-scale production of a synthetic hormone could eventually eradicate this type of dwarfism. The HGH synthesized in 1971 by University of California biochemist C.H. Li was only 10% as effective as the natural hormone. But Mr. Li, who heads the university's Hormone Research Laboratory in San Francisco, is optimistic about eventually developing a synthetic HGH able to stimulate 25% to 50% as much growth as the natural hormone. Then, he predicts, drug firms will begin commercial production of a combination natural-and-synthetic growth hormone. "Very conservatively, we may be up to 25% in five years," he says, "but it may be as little as six months to a year."

The hormone doesn't work with the vast majority of disproportionate dwarfs, known as

achondroplasts. They suffer from a genetic bone disorder that causes children to grow as little as one-fourth of an inch a year, instead of the normal two inches. Doctors are attempting to induce normal stature in these children—as well as in pituitary dwarf children—by administering a modified sex hormone called oxandrolone. Both groups have shown increased rates of growth with the sex hormone, but the Moore Clinic's director, Dr. Victor McKusick, says more extensive studies are needed to completely convince him the treatment works.

SACRAMENTO BEE Wednesday, Oct. 10, 1973

Dwarfed Child May Get Help From Hormone

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (UPI) —A University of North Carolina medical school researcher Tuesday announced isolation of a growth-promoting hormone that could help dwarfed children and aid in cancer research.

Dr. Judgon J. Van Wyk said isolation of a newly-purified hormone from the blood called "somatomedin," is "a major milestone in researching human growth."

He said it has great potential as a stimulator of growth in dwarfed children.

"We may be onto something here which could open doors in medicine we never before dreamed of," Van Wyk said.

He said clinical testing of "somatomedin" was not yet possible because of the scarcity of the hormone.

French Dwarf Has Hope

By ELIAS ANTAR

PARIS (AP) — The most successful dwarf in France is neither clown nor jockey but a brilliant 71-year-old jurist, mountain climber and ace pistol shot who hopes to help thousands of French dwarfs out of their misery.

Jean Brisse-Saint-Macary, 4-feet 5 inches tall, suffered through a tortured childhood and a lifetime of prejudice and discrimination before reaching a haven of respect and recognition in the normal world.

Brisse holds a doctorate in law, is a recognized expert on rural economy, was a vicepresident of the Congress of French Notaries Public and was a counselor at the French justice ministry. He made a career as a notary public, an official who in France undertakes many of the functions of a lawyer.

Last year, he retired to a little village in the Pyrenees Mountains and is now completing a book on his life. He hopes it will inspire other dwarfs.

Brisse estimates there are 10,000 dwarfs in France, although no census ever has been taken and the state does not recognize them as handicapped persons. Many Frenchmen consider dwarfs figures of fun.

"I hope my book will draw attention to their plight, which can be summed up in one word — miserable," Brisse said in an interview. "Then I will use my contacts in government and the justice ministry to try to form an association of dwarfs duly recognized by the state."

Brisse said it will be difficult to group together all the dwarfs in France. Some have gained notoriety as clowns and circus acrobats, itinerant peddlers or odd-job men.

"Most of them have great difficulty finding any kind of regular, rewarding, employment," Brisse said. "I know of one man who is a treasurer in the Toulouse municipal-



SUCCESSFUL—Jean Brisse-Saint-Macary, the most successful dwarf in France, is shown at home in l'Isle en Doden in the French Pyrenees. A brilliant jurist, mountain climber and pistol shot, he retired to the village last year to write a book on his life.

ity, but otherwise the life of a dwarf in France is not a favored one.

"As for prejudice, well, I can tell you monieur, that it is very rooted."

A few years ago, a group of youngsters threw stones at Brisse in the street. "I finally turned on them and slapped one in the face. His mother stepped out of a doorway, slapped me, knocked me to the ground and poured insults on me.

"In 1970, I was sitting in a

cafe and four English girls came in and sat at the next table. They soon made it very clear that they wanted to sleep with a dwarf," he said. "When I told them I was a law official, they got up and left in a hurry.

"As you can understand, the life of a dwarf is not easy."

Brisse was prompted to write about his life after a Paris theater director staged an adaptation of the opera "Turnandot," starring one

Despite continued opposition from a woman and 18 dwarfs. The production won favorable reviews and this persuaded Brisse there was public interest in the plight of dwarfs.

Brisse was born with achondroplasia, an affliction which leaves a person with a normal head and torso but shrunk or deformed limbs. Everyone else in the family was normal, and Brisse's father — a doctor and a general in the French Army — insisted that young Jean fit the family mold.

As a child, he was trapped in bed and underwent an excruciatingly painful process to soften his bones and stretch him. "This treatment lasted three months," Brisse writes in his book. Still he remained a dwarf. His legs were then bound into painful, cumbersome steel bars for four years. It did no good.

School was a psychological minefield. His fellows taunted him and Brisse says his teacher enjoyed making him suffer. "Brisse, you are abnormal, an imbecile, a dangerous being. Everything that comes from you is evil. I will break you," the teacher told him.

One intolerable afternoon, Brisse climbed to the roof of the school. "Just as I was leaping into the stairwell, someone grabbed my leg," he writes. "It was Father Segond, the most humble man in the school. He had understood what I was going to do. I don't know which of us was crying the most."

tion from his father, Brisse went on to law school. At 22, he had a tubercular inflammation of the breastbone, and he recovered. He attributes it to a night spent in meditation in the grotto at Lourdes.

He tried to find peace in a Trappist monastery, but after two years he was told that he didn't have what it took to become a monk. Brisse says that in these painful, formative years, he started climbing the 10,000 foot peaks of

Of Aiding Others Like Him

the Pyrenees to find solace in the natural beauty of the surroundings. He also took up pistol and rifle shooting, becoming an acknowledged expert.

As his career flourished, Brisse married a normal woman and had a daughter who was normal. But a son with symptoms of dwarfism died at the age of eight.

From the serenity of his retirement, Brisse tells other dwarfs of France in the preface to his book, "Memoirs of an Achondroplasiac." "Wherever destiny has

placed us, it is essential for us, my infirm brothers, to work, to create and to give. We must face things squarely without ever giving way to the desire to escape."

Sacto Bee April 21, '74

4-Feet-8 And Walking Tall In Work To Find Jobs For The Handicapped

By Harold Knox
Bee Staff Writer

Stereotyped ideas can extend in strange directions. Ask Jim Kay of Carmichael.

"We constantly run into people who have the impression that because we're physically small, we're also mentally handicapped," he noted yesterday.

Kay, 36 years old and 4 feet 8 inches tall, is executive secretary for the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. He is also chairman of Education and Employment for a 450-member, three-state district of Little People of America Inc., which met yesterday in the Sacramento Inn. The meeting continues through today.

"In school, especially, we often run into teachers who can't believe our minds are normal," said Kay. "Whenever I meet a 20-year-old who doesn't have an education — that's 20 years

lost. Education is the key to everything.

"We also have an expression that one hears all the time. Parents tell their children to 'be a big boy' or 'be a big girl.' That implies it somehow is connected with maturity."

Then, said Kay, there are the ones who are embarrassed by the sight of a little person.

"A kid will say 'Look' and we'll hear the parents holler, 'Shut up!' I always have the feeling that as soon as they are out of sight the kid gets a whack. At least children are honest. They haven't seen an adult their size before, usually."

Kay reserves his pet peeve, however, for still another stereotype: "All black persons eat watermelon and all little people are in circuses."

Real handicaps, Kay pointed out, are mostly found in public facilities such as buses and the like. And the fact that most houses are built on an inflexibly standard size.

Medically speaking, 49 different types of syndrome have been found responsible for failure of an individual to grow to normal size. Only in case of pituitary failure can medicine occasionally be effective in causing further growth.

Kay said he backs the Little People organization primarily because he wants to help those in need of it. Interested persons may contact him at 5738 Straight Way, No. 1, Carmichael.

"Not all our members are little people," Kay said. "Some are parents and so fourth. Also, there are many more little people who are not members."

The national organization promotes dissemination of medical literature about problems of little people and helps in other ways, such as seeking expanded job opportunities for them.

Despite all the problems connected with being abnormally small, Kay said there is one advantage. "Well, for me personally, people remember me. That's an advantage."

Little Newlyweds Tackle Tall Order — Finding Jobs

Newlyweds Steve Nerden, 4-foot-2, and Patricia, 4-foot, say their biggest problem is not their size but finding jobs. "We don't figure we're handicapped . . . it's just harder 'n hell to get a job," said the Boulder, Colo., resident who sits with his wife on a chair that has had its legs sawed off to accommodate them.



Serving A New Generation

Remember the little man in the bellhop uniform who used to shrilly "call for Phillip Morris"? Little four-foot, six-inch Johnny stands on a stool to serve ice cream to one of his customers in his Tallahassee ice cream parlor. The man who once delighted children while selling their parents on cigarettes now thrills a new generation by decorating cones with faces of Mickey Mouse, Daffy Duck and Pinocchio.

—AP Wirephoto

9/23/74
San Jose Mercury



Big Little Man

^{May 4, '76}
Larry Carr of Portland, Ore., poses with his wife, Mary, after he was elected Northwest District Director of the Little People of America last weekend. The group has 2,000 members who stand 4 feet 10 inches or less.

AP Wirephoto



Free Press Photo by IRA ROSENBERG

Jerry Couretas, 8, far left, is average-sized. Beside him are, from left, Marge Taunt, Mary Couretas (his mother), Chuck Franckowiak, Paul Kehr, Linda Lyngaas, Amy Brieden, Mary Totaro, behind her is

Ron Sova, Gus Couretas (Jerry's father), Stanley Powell, Neil Chervenak and Brian Morris, far right; Barbara Morris is seated with her children. They're all little people.

Happy Little Lives: Understanding Dwarfs

BY JIM GALLAGHER
Free Press Staff Writer

Brian Morris kept insisting he was 4-foot-6, but the other dwarfs were skeptical.

"Brian," his wife, Barbara, scolded in a voice that teetered on the brink of giggly laughter. "You always said you were 4-foot-4. How come you're two inches tall all of a sudden?"

So Morris, 31, flopped out of his chair and took off his shoes. "Ron here says he's 4-foot-4," he said, pointing a finger at 18-year-old Ron Sova of Troy. "And I'm two inches taller than he is."

THEN HE MADE Sova take off his shoes, and they stood together, back to back. True enough. Morris was taller — but just barely.

"Well, maybe I'm 4-foot-5," he concluded as he lifted himself back into the chair. He grinned sheepishly. The other dwarfs bubbled over with laughter.

For these dwarfs, apparently, being little is no big deal, and they're not afraid to joke about their own stature. They're members of the Little People of America — generally referred to as LPA — a national organization of men and women 4-foot-10 or smaller. About 2,000 of the nation's estimated 25,000 dwarfs are members.

SINCE SATURDAY, LPA has been holding its annual convention at the Sheraton-Southfield.

"This organization enables little people to meet others like themselves who have made it in life, who are married or successful in business," said Morris, LPA's national treasurer. "That's very important. We're really more than a social club."

Morris, now lives in West Bloomfield, grew up in England and moved to Lancaster, Pa., when he was 16. One of 10 children, the rest of whom were average sized — LPA frowns on the word "normal" in this context — he knew no other dwarfs and developed an inferiority complex.

"My family tried to put my size in perspective for me," he said, "but I never dated and I always felt left out. Now I can see that this was more self-imposed than imposed by my peer group, but at the time I didn't realize this."

"My dad would sit down with me and tell me my size didn't matter, but he was 5-foot-10, and I thought: 'What can he know?' When anybody who's not at the same disadvantage tries to tell you not to worry, you just assume he doesn't know what he's talking about. I kept putting these limitations on myself."

When Morris was 18, his mother saw a dwarf performing in an amusement park and asked him about her son's situation. The dwarf told her about LPA.

"The first time I went to a meeting," Morris recalled, "I met a little person who had a Ph.D."

"I started to realize I had a lot to offer life. My self respect improved. If it were not for LPA, I would not have attained the status I have now."

Morris, a college graduate, is a certified public accountant. According to LPA members, average-sized people tend to underestimate dwarfs, and families with dwarf children tend to

be over-protective. Little people dislike being patted on the head, and resent those people who reach over their heads on line to get served first.

"People are used to relating size and age," Morris said. "Some people figure because you're small you must be stupid. They try to take advantage of you. We have to get away from the stereotyping of dwarfs."

"The first two questions a dwarf is asked," he said, "are, 'Do you wrestle' and 'Are you in show business?' Actually, less than one percent of all dwarfs are in show business."

Neil Chervenak, 38, nodded his head in agreement. Now a bartender and maintenance man in Detroit, Chervenak spent several years working as a clown in a traveling road-show. For three years the 4-foot-6 Chervenak wrestled a 300-pound bear and earned \$100 a week.

LIKE MORRIS, most of the people in LPA are achondroplastic dwarfs, characterized by short limbs, large heads and flat noses. However, according to Dr. Victor A. McKusick of Johns Hopkins Clinic in Baltimore, there are almost 100 other forms of dwarfism. McKusick has been studying the phenomenon for several years, and LPA has raised money to help make his research possible.

The name "achondroplasia" — literally it means no development of the cartilage — is not really an accurate one, McKusick said, because the real problem is an underdevelopment of the cartilage, which causes arms and legs to become crooked as the dwarf matures.

Other dwarfs, McKusick said, are afflicted with insufficient pituitary gland functioning. The body development of these dwarfs is more proportional, and the term midget often is applied to them.

RESEARCH TO DATE, McKusick said, indicates the dwarfism is related to the age of the father at the time the child is conceived. One study revealed that the average age of dwarf-producing fathers was almost 37. It would appear, McKusick said, that the sort of sperm cell mutation that produces dwarfism becomes more likely as men grow older.

"Aside from their physical uniqueness, dwarfs run the whole range of intelligence and personality," McKusick said. "Many are very bright and successful. And, like so many people of average size, other dwarfs are dull."

Gus Couretas, 53, joined LPA in 1961, when the organization was only four years old. "It changed my life," he said. "It changed my outlook, my goals..."

"Yeah," Barbara Morris interrupted, "and you got married, too." Couretas a 4-foot-2 truck dispatcher who lives in Pontiac, met his wife Mary at an LPA convention. Mrs. Morris met Brian at another convention.

"I used to date tall girls," Couretas said, "but the trouble is, some people resent it. They look at you funny, they make jokes."

THE COURETASES have an average-sized son, eight-year-old Jerry. "Some of my friends ask me, 'How come your mom and dad are so little' Jerry said. "But I don't try to explain. If I do they just don't listen. They've done it so long now it doesn't bother me any more. My good friends — they understand."

Detroit Free Press

for and about Women

Monday, July 21, 1975

1-B

When achondroplastic dwarfs marry, there is one chance in four that an average-sized child will result from the union. There is a 50 percent chance of producing another dwarf.

Dwarf children have a single dwarf gene, which is dominant. Children born with two dwarf genes do not live very long after birth. "Barbara and I had two double-dominant children," Morris said, "The little girl lived for four months. The boy died right away."

Since then the Morrises have adopted two dwarf youngsters. LPA has a program to facilitate the adoption of "little lilies," the group's name for dwarf children. Youngsters can be enrolled in LPA as soon as they're born.

For teenagers who participate actively, LPA provides them with a social life.

"I felt dumb being the only little person. I never saw anybody like me before," Ron Sova said. So when a dwarf girl about his own age approached Ron in a bowling alley and told him about LPA, he was eager to join. Now he's going steady with an LPA member from West Virginia.

"I'm able to show my peers that I can get a date too," said Amy Brieden of Grosse Pointe, 3-foot-10 and 16 years old.



Big Event for Little People

Aug. 26, 1976

Hungarian circus performers Sandor Rasky and Elisabeth Ritter try on their formal attire in a San Francisco

department store in a rehearsal of the biggest little wedding. The bride and groom, both 40 inches tall,

are scheduled to wed today during a performance of the Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus.

—UPI Telephoto

From 33 Inches

Everything's 'Looking Up' 5 27-79

By CHARLES HILLINGER
The Los Angeles Times

Because of their size, twins John and Greg Rice, 27, are in great demand as public speakers all over the United States.

They are only 33 inches tall.

"We're on the lecture circuit because people want to know how a couple of little guys like us are able to do so well in the business world," says John.

So far this year the twin dwarfs have \$4 million in sales to their credit.

"We take time out from selling houses three or four times a month to fly all over to motivate large groups of salespeople," added Greg.

The Florida Realtors believe they are the smallest twins in the United States.

"We have never met another set of dwarf twins and doctors told us there have been only a handful of twins like us in recorded medical history," said John after a recent speech in the Los Angeles area.

JOHN AND GREG don't let their size slow them down and are constantly joking about it.

"Our motto is to think big," says John. "We always tell everybody our problem was we didn't start thinking big soon enough."

They challenge listeners who complain or are unhappy because they haven't done too well.

"Look at all we've had to overcome and we've made it. What's your excuse?" they ask.

"We're still in the hugging and kissing stage," laughs John. "Women are always picking us up and giving us a big hug and kisses."

The twins have had the same doctor all their lives, a pediatrician named C. Jennings Derrick.

"We're his only patients who never grew out of it," quips Greg.

They tell about a time they visited a sideshow in a circus to see a performer billed as "the smallest man in the world."

"We had to look up to him," recalls John. "We destroyed his act."

"We've never had a problem adjusting," said Greg, seriously. "Maybe it's because we have each other."

John told of a recent night out with friends at a Chinese restaurant.

"We were seated at the table and a waiter came over to give us the menus. I asked him directions to the men's room and excused myself.

"The waiter stared at me as I walked off. Everybody always stares. Greg was still out parking the car. As I disappeared into the men's room, Greg walked in the front door. The waiter did a double take and asked Greg:

"How did you do that?"

THEY ENJOY Las Vegas.

Laughs John, "The slot machines are too high for us and so are the tables. We play blackjack on our knees on the high stools. Somebody has to lift us up."

"People are always telling us we're lucky because we've been so successful," said Greg. "We tell them you spell luck 'W-O-R-K.' We find the harder we work the luckier we get."

They each drive a 1979 Cadillac Seville with built-up seats and extended pedals. When they are riding as passengers they stand up in order to see where they're going.

"When we're selling homes our approach is a little different than other salesmen," allows John.

"Instead of telling potential buyers to be sure to

See TWINS, Page C14



Los Angeles Times Photo

They are only 33 inches tall, but John Rice, left, and his brother, Greg, have made it big in real estate.

notice the gorgeous view, Greg and I tell them about the breathtaking baseboards and the knee-deep shag carpeting."

THEY WEAR identical suits tailor-made to the tune of \$300 to \$400 each.

They buy the most expensive children's shoes they can find (size 1½) and have a shoemaker add three inches to the heels.

Worry about their size? Never.

"Most people spend a lifetime trying to create an identity. Ours is built in," says John. "Unlike celebrities, we can't put on dark glasses to avoid being noticed."

"People who normally wouldn't say 'boo' to strangers come up to Greg and me and ask if they could have their pictures taken with us. We're flattered. We always get the star treatment."

"We don't mind being small — just so long as nobody steps on us."

34 INCHES TALL

July 19 '76

Bar's Tiny Bouncer Keeps 'Em in Tow

Big," but the hotel staff had to think small in preparation for the gathering. Special ramps were put at doors for the handicapped, steps were put at the cashier cage and climb-up stools went in elevators, and maids hung the towels low.

MIAMI BEACH (UPI) — Pat Bilon, probably the world's smallest night club bouncer at his height of 34 inches, said Sunday he never has problems with unruly drunks.

And a Georgia elementary school teacher who is about Bilon's size said his diminutive stature helps him approach young students, who put him "on a high pedestal."

"You just have to love people and get tough with them once in a while," said Bilon with a grin. He once had to yank a chair from under a loud six-foot customer.

Stories like that are a commonplace at the Barcelona Hotel this week, where 400 members of Little People of America are holding their annual convention.

"It's like Christmas here," said Nick Poisson, manager of a sports equipment store in Guntersville, Ala. "A lot of people back home stare at me like a circus freak, but here I'm with my own people."

Poisson is a midget — his limbs equally proportioned, but his growth stunted by deficiencies of his pituitary gland.

Dennis Binion, a fourth-grade teacher from Villa Rica, Ga., said, "No, I'm not bitter. I'm a lucky guy."

Binion was married a year ago to a "little person" he met at an LPA convention. They have plans to adopt a child.

Many of the little people have hip, knee or back problems because of their dwarfed bone structure. A group of medical experts will hold a clinic at the convention this week to counsel LPA members on those problems.

The convention theme is "Think

The Sacramento Bee Scene

Page B4

Monday, August 2, 1976

Marion Van Harken, right, admits, 'When you have difficulties you climb higher.'



The Little People

The trouble with being a little person is that it's a big person's world. There is also the world of "The Little People" — of dwarfs and midgets — and photographer Eddie Adams examines that world in this photo essay.

By **EDDIE ADAMS**
Photographer For
The Associated Press

ATTILA THE Hun was a dwarf.

Napoleon and two presidents of the United States — John Quincy Adams and Martin Van Buren — were shorter than normal.

No one knows how many dwarfs and midgets there are in the United States today — estimates run as high as 100,000 people under 4 feet 10. More than 500,000 Americans are under five feet.

Legend and myth called small people elves, gnomes, leprechauns, goblins and pixies. They have existed for as long as the human race, yet the world knows little about them.

Midgets and dwarfs live in every country and are born into every race. They are doctors, lawyers, nurses, schoolteachers, firemen,

engineers and truck drivers. They are people; just smaller than most, but people like you and me.

SCHOOL KIDS laugh, adults point and stare. Dr. Hugo Brodesky, a psychiatrist in Jacksonville, Fla., who stands 4 feet 7, says: "If you are under five feet, let's face it, you are different. Suppose you see all the trees around you with green leaves and one had blue leaves. Wouldn't you be surprised or taken back a little?"

The average American is 5 feet 10.

A malfunctioning pituitary gland produces a midget — a miniature carbon copy of an average-sized person, but with a squeaky voice. The dwarf, on the other hand, is abnormally proportioned, with normal head, trunk and voice, but short arms and legs. The condition results from bone disease, or a malfunctioning thyroid gland, or a wayward gene that stunts skeletal growth and cartilage development.

When midgets mate, they almost always produce a child of normal size. The baby of two dwarfs can be either a dwarf or normal.

Frank and Emma Lentini of Auburn, N.Y., are dwarfs, just over four feet tall. Their son is 5 feet 10.

Mrs. Terry De Lair, a social worker in Waterloo, N.Y., says: "I am only four feet tall and my daughter Paula at birth was five pounds, 4 ounces and 18 1/4 inches in length, almost half my size."

DR. CHARLES Scott Jr., director of the University of Texas Medical Genetics Clinic and chairman of the Medical Advisory Board of the Little People of America, explains that achondroplasia, a cartilage and bone condition, produces the most common type of dwarf.

Achondroplasia strikes randomly once in every 40,000 births. There is no cure for achondroplasia, but smallness resulting from thyroid or pituitary conditions can be treated, in some cases by injections that induce growth.

Most people don't realize their condition until they are 8 or 9, when their school chums pass them by in height. In many cases, that's when an inferiority complex begins, driving many little people to be well-educated and competitive, to outdo those of normal size. Ancient history tells us that three kings were midgets.

A common outcry of little people is that they suffer job discrimination

more than other minority groups, although their intellectual development is unaffected by their physical condition.

JOE MARTIN, principal of a New Jersey elementary school, says of Jean Davis, a 4-foot-4-inch tall kindergarten teacher: "Jean is six feet tall in my book. She relates to the children. They love her. I love her. I need more like her."

Pat Bilon is a nightclub bouncer; he checks IDs at the door in Youngstown, Ohio, although he's only 2 foot 10 — one inch taller than Michu of Ringling Bros. circus fame. He had thought of himself as three feet tall, until he took a driver's license test. "They measured my height and said I was 2 foot 10. We had some fight going on until I was proven wrong."

David Urbina Urbina, a representative in the Puerto Rican legislature, says that "being 4 feet 10 has its advantages. People are impressed when they see such a small man with a strong resonant voice. They see it as an act of courage..."

"I've used my height in politics. It motivates political slogans like 'the little giant' or 'the David' from

See Page B5

Little People of America provides aid to 'shorties'

Sacramento Union 7/23/79

Their motto is "Think Big."

That slogan is appropriate, considering that every member of the Little People of America is less than 4-foot-11 in height.

"At the first meeting we had, we were called the Midgets of America," founder Billy Barty, a 3-foot-9 actor with a long list of credits, said.

"The public relations guy at the Riverside Hotel in Reno thought that name up, but we just had to change it."

It was only appropriate that the name be changed. Not all of the group's 3,500 members throughout the United States are midgets.

Many are dwarfs (distinguished from midgets in that they are not built proportionately), and some are children.

"There were several attempts to organize us (little people) in the 50s, but none were successful," Barty said. "But the opportunity came along for me; the opportunity for the proper publicity, the proper backing the proper timing came along. A Las Vegas hotel offered me some help in getting the thing going — sort of made me an offer I couldn't refuse when I was traveling with Spike Jones — so I started it."

Midgets of America became a reality in Owatonna, Minn., in 1957. "I had a concept laid out when we went to the first meeting," Barty said. "We all sat down (there were 20 little people from nine states represented) and brought up a number of different things we wanted to do with the organization. In 1960 we had our next national meetings and things started falling together."

LPA offers a number of

programs to its members, including a housing referral service, a job line, information about clothing, insurance, child-parent relations, adoption, relations with other people, medical services and a national newsletter. One of LPA's most popular programs, which provides information about the problems and causes of dwarfism, is a series of short-stature clinics, begun by Dr. Leonard Langer of the University of Wisconsin.

LPA is divided into 12 districts, each district covering a number of states, with several chapters in each district.

"We've been trying to establish a chapter in the Sacramento area for some time," Barty said. The nearest active organization is in Oakland.

"We had a real good group about 12 years ago, but everyone moved away and we lost the nucleus of the club," said Mrs. William Rodgers, formerly the LPA's contact person in Sacramento. "The Sacramento area has kind of dropped out, although they're still very active in the Bay Area. Sometimes we had 10 little people and their families at our meetings — it was a good family group."

Rodgers is not a little person herself, but her son was.

"My son was small, but he lucked out," she said. "He had the type of dwarfism that can be treated (pituitary), and he grew to normal size."

Enrolling children into the LPA, where they are called "little littles," has proved an irksome problem for the organization.

"A lot of parents don't let their children join, because they're afraid there's a

stigma or something. Some older people don't join because when they're with big people, they're different. They're the center of attention. But when they're with us, they're like everyone else," Barty said.

"There are approximately 100,000 little people in the United States, one out of every 40,000, so we have a lot of work to do as far as organizing them goes."

Organizations of little people are sprouting up world wide. "We have associations with similar groups in England, France, Germany, Israel, India and other countries," Barty said. "last year at our national convention in Dallas, we had 542 people from all 50 states, England and Canada."

Peggy King, a 17-year-old high school senior who stands only 3 feet, 9 inches tall, has some advice for people like her. "Try to be as normal as possible . . . realize that God loves you. If people can't accept you because of your size, they have a bigger problem than you do," she says. Peggy has been participating since age 11 in an organization called Little People of America. Last week she was voted the organization's Teen Queen at the annual convention in Lancaster, Pa., which was attended by 575 little people from across the United States. Her mother, Charlotte King, says she and her husband knew when Peggy was born that something was wrong, but it was five months before her condition was diagnosed as a form of dwarfism. Neither her parents nor brothers Patrick III, 21, and David, 20, or sister Judy, 15, have been afflicted by dwarfism.

Unmasking the robots

5/78



Kenny Baker

Kenny Baker was the man inside Artoo-Detoo (R2D2), the little domed robot that Mark Hamill describes as a "mechanical teddy bear." Baker is 3 ft. 8 in. tall and, at 44, is a successful musician who has played in cabarets and clubs in England, throughout Europe and North Africa, and who also has worked in circuses. He earned \$6,500 for his work inside the metal contraption. "I'd go a few feet in it, and then I'd get flakey," he says. Married to another small person, he and his wife have two normal-sized sons. He wishes he'd get more recognition from "Star Wars." "I just bought a new Citroen car," he says, "on the strength of the sequel."

WATERLOO, N.Y.

Volunteer New York fireman Blye De Lair, left, has accepted a big job in his small world.



Midgets

Continued from B4

David and Goliath that put me in the position of a hero."

Lee Kitchens of Richardson, Tex., just over three feet, is the vice president of Texas Instruments and pilot of his own aircraft.

LITTLE PEOPLE almost always are defensive and say they don't have problems. Yet the homes they live in and their daily routines can be difficult to cope with. Opening doors or a dresser drawer, shopping for groceries, crossing a street, making phone calls from a telephone booth, purchasing clothes. "Thank goodness children's clothes are now styled like adults," comments a little person.

Little people say that sexual relations with normal people aren't really a problem; the normal person's

curiosity takes over and quite often a mixed marriage takes place. As one four-footer said: "I have an advantage over many men. Most dance cheek to cheek, I dance breast to cheek."

In 1957, 20 little people led by Hollywood actor Billy Barty met in Reno, Nev., to form the Little People of America. The only requirements for membership are to be 4 foot 10 or less and to "think big," the organization's motto.

AS MANY as 600 members attend the annual week-long convention, held this year in Chicago, and they seem full of gaiety.

"But don't let this week fool you," said one little lady.

"Remember, we still have another 51 weeks to live before our next convention."



For Pat Bilon of Ohio, left, even the house he lives in can present problems for doing everyday chores.

Everything's Big At School For 'Little Person'

By DOUG ERNST
Register Staff Writer

When school opens Tuesday, five - year - olds throughout Napa County will enter an educational realm which will take them through corridors, textbooks and social traumas for the next 13 years.

For Napa's Tara Mills, 5, the corridors will be particularly large, the textbooks a bit heavy and the social traumas especially severe.

Tara is a dwarf — a "little person," if you will. When she enters Kindergarten class at St. John's School for the first time Tuesday, not only will the tables, chairs, desks, and doors and windows seem oversized, but so will her classmates.

"Her whole world is tall," said Karen Mills, who, with her husband, Gary, has raised Tara and her three - year - old sister, Katie.

The couple is naturally concerned that Tara is not overpowered in the presence of 25 larger children.

But, rather than fret over the predicament, the couple has come to terms with it and has adopted an open, optimistic attitude which Mrs. Mills says is essential if Tara is to believe in herself.

"If she feels good about herself," said Mrs. Mills, "We're not going to have any problems."

A case in point can be found across town at the Wyatt and Dee Haines household, where 10 - year - old Robbie Haines, also a dwarf, feels very good about himself.

Five years ago, Robbie entered Bel Aire Park Elementary School facing many of the same problems which Tara Mills must now confront.

Today, five years later, Robbie is regarded as "one of the old crew" at Bel Aire, where he will begin fourth grade Tuesday.

He is interested in math, respected for his talents as a little league baseball player, a former violin and mime enthusiast and an accomplished skateboarder.

Ask him how he'll do in fourth grade, and Robbie will tell you he's going to get "straight A's."

Ask him what he hopes to become, and he'll say he'd like to be a big league baseball player.

Ask him to change his pants before going out to play, and he'll argue the point.

"Wouldn't you call that normal?" asked Mrs. Haines.

Couples giving birth to dwarf children, said Mrs. Haines, "wouldn't panic if they knew that children like Robbie can lead reasonably normal lives."

Parental acceptance of the dwarf child is contagious, she added.

"If we can accept them, other people will."

(Continued on Page 2)



TARA MILLS

Napa Register 9/2/78



SIZE DOESN'T MATTER much to Robbie Haines, an accomplished athlete who has no trouble maneuvering his skateboard with the best of them. (Register Photos)

☆ It's A Big World Out There

(Continued from Page 1)

Mrs. Mills echoed that philosophy.

"We're going to deal very openly about it. Once the (Kindergarten) kids know and realize that, we won't have any problems."

Tara's experience in preschool for the past two years bears out that point.

"The preschool kids really liked her and accepted her for her personality and what she is," said Mrs. Mills.

"The more people know about her, see her and understand the situation, the easier it's going to be for her."

Harriet Stickney, parents chairman of a San Bruno - based organization known as Little People of America, helps parents provide their dwarf children with "a good, common sense approach to living."

"We've always felt that the dwarf child with no other complications should be mainstreamed," said Ms. Stickney.

"They will do better in regular classrooms, where they can see themselves as someone who has just as much on the ball, and where they can develop their own means for coping with teasing and peer pressure," she added.

For the most part, said Ms. Stickney, school officials have "bent over backwards" to work dwarf pupils into routine classroom activities by providing lower door handles, altering steep stairways and removing other architectural barriers.

Psychological barriers, however, are what parents fear most for their dwarf children.

According to Mrs. Haines, dwarf children are often treated by their size rather than their age.

"Parents have a tendency to do this, so it's understandable for the general public to do it.

"People really aren't aware," she added.

Mrs. Mills agreed.

Both women emphasized, however, that the public's lack of knowledge regarding dwarfism can be overcome through education.

Mrs. Haines said she encourages Robbie to be tolerant of the public and to "accept it as the (public's) learning process, rather than be critical."

Mrs. Mills said she is more than happy to talk to people who stare or point at her daughter, and hopes Tara will be just as open in school.

"I want Tara to deal with it and not be bitter about it," said Mrs. Mills.

Nevertheless, Tara and Robbie can expect to take more than their share of lumps in school.

And, sometimes, the lumps are harder for parents to take than it is for their children.

"Parents sometimes get hurt for their child," said Mrs. Haines, even if the child has learned to handle the pain.

A couple with a dwarf child, she said, "should not be so hovering."

"Just let them be themselves, mingle themselves, take a few of the knocks and deal with it themselves."

For Karen and Gary Mills, optimism — and courage — is the key.

"We've got a lot ahead of us, no doubt, but there's no doubt we can do it. Tara's going to do it. We feel good about it," Mrs. Mills said.

'Little People' Plan S.J. Convention

Some 200 "little people" from the western United States will gather in San Jose Oct. 22 through 24 for their regional convention.

Dedicated to the interests of the undersized, Little People of America, Inc., includes not only midgets and dwarfs, but the parents of youngsters who, for any of a variety of reasons, never will achieve normal stature.

According to spokesman Bob Peasley, age of those attending will range

from 6 months to 60 years. Special events will include a softball game to be played Saturday, Oct. 23, at Biebrach Park and a talent show that night at the San Jose Hyatt.

San Jose Mercury Monday, October 25, 1976

Weekend's Motto: Think Big



A Gathering Of Little People Trying To Think Big

Sat, Oct 23 '76
By WILLYS PECK
Staff Writer

The children following the small girl through the supermarket were shrill and insistent in their questioning.

WHY was she so tiny? They could tell by looking at her that she was a "big" girl, but they were taller than she.

With persistence born of callousness, honest curiosity or the devastating candor of the very young, they kept after the attractive blonde who, at 18, had achieved her full height of a scant four feet.

Finally she turned on her tormentors, all strangers. "My mommy put me in the dryer," she retorted, "and I shrunk."

That stopped them cold.

The incident was related by Bob Peasley, head of the social sciences department at Lynbrook High School, who has an intimate concern with the matter of dwarfism.

His 3-year-old daughter is a dwarf, a fact confirmed to him and his wife within hours after the child's birth. Sometimes, he noted, it takes months or more than a year for the normality to be established, with the resulting emotional strain.

The point is that the Peasleys started immediately in conditioning themselves, their friends, and, as she grew in self-realization, their daughter, to the fact that she would go through life as one of the world's "little people."

One of the things they did was to join the Little People of America (LPA), a nationwide organization of which the western regional district is holding its convention in San Jose this weekend.

It is among other things, Peasley explained, a forum in which parents of children who are midgets (abnormally small but with proportional bodies) or dwarfs (disproportional bodies) can gain that element of support that comes only from those who are similarly situated.

Actually, the parents' group functions as an auxiliary to LPA, which was founded in 1957 by TV and movie personality Billy Barty.

In referring to the supermarket episode, Peasley remarked that it isn't the function of LPA to instruct its members in suitable *bon mots* for such situations.

Rather, the idea is for the little people to be able to function with sufficient confidence so they won't be fazed by even such extreme confrontations.

"If you can't accept the fact that you're a small person, how do you expect others to?" he summarized.

That particular girl happened to be especially well-adjusted, he said, and was a high-school cheer leader.

From a medical standpoint, said Peasley, LPA doesn't base its activities on expectation of a possible cure for dwarfism, although there is an LPA Foundation that disburses funds for medical research in the field.

It addresses itself to the problems faced by the

very small, in employment, public facilities, socializing, just about every area where the odds are against success for someone under five feet.

Peasley pointed out that little people have chalked up some notable achievements. A former LPA president from Texas, an engineer, flies his own plane.

Virtually every occupational field is represented in LPA membership. There are professional people, teachers, technicians, bankers, entertainers. The list goes on.

It is compatible with the LPA approach that there is a bit of a theatrical flair, too.

Saturday afternoon there will be a softball game between LPA teams from northern and southern parts of the state. Saturday night there will be a talent show at convention headquarters in the Hyatt House.

Basically, though, the LPA approach can be summed up in its motto:

"Think big."



'LITTLE PEOPLE' AT PLAY — Approximately 100 members of the western regional district of Little People of America (LPA) met in San Jose over the weekend, and, while here, some of them in the uniform of the Bay Area Stumps played a softball game at Biebrach Park, as depicted here. Later, they staged a talent show, including a scene presided over by Al Stickney, at left. LPA includes parents of children who will "grow up small," as well as adults, many successful in business and the professions. Age of those attending ranged from 8 months to 83 years. The "little people's" organization's motto is "Think Big."

—Staff photos

Thurs. Aug 5, 1976



AP Photos

Little Circus Man Dies

Capt. Nicu De Barscy, 91, who stood only three feet tall and in his youth traveled with the circus, was buried today in Enid, Okla. The son of an exiled Hungarian nobleman and a circus

bearded lady, Nick retired from his travels in 1932 and had been in a rest home since the middle 1950s. File photos show him as a young man in 1918 and in 1972.



People

A Lesson That's Short And Sweet

On the first day of school, Lois Lamb told her kindergarten class that "people come in all sizes, shapes and colors."

She really was referring to size, since she is a dwarf, and at 4-foot-1 is about the same size as her 22 pupils at the south Dallas school.

"When I was made by God, he decided I was going to be a little person and teach little people just like you," she said.

Officials of the Dallas Independent School District say Lamb is the first dwarf to teach in Dallas public schools.

"One of the great things about Lamb is that she's more than willing to explain about her size," said her principal, Melvin Howe. "She wants to be accepted for what she is as a human being, and that's fantastic."

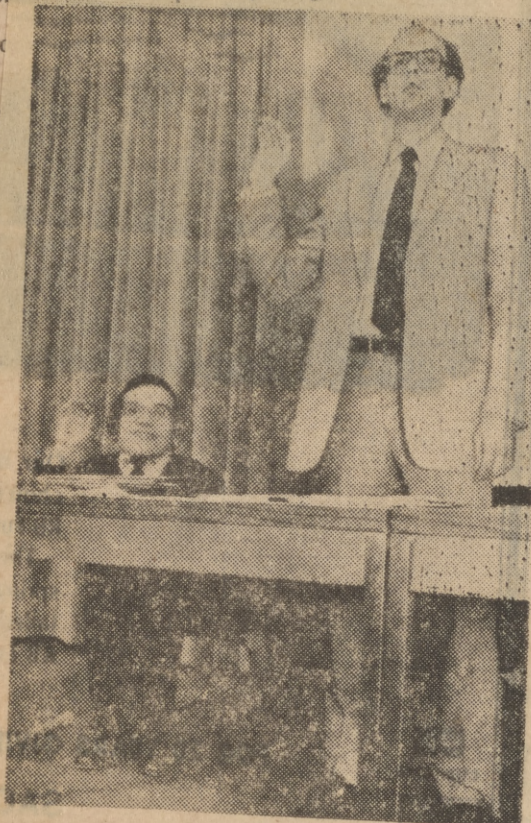
Lamb explains to the class that she is a dwarf, not a midget, and prefers to be called a "little person."

"Now, can you say that: Mrs. Lamb is a little



"Since I was a child, I always wanted to be a teacher," says Lois Lamb. "It's very important. You're laying the groundwork of their lives." Lamb says she thinks she will set an example for the class to show the obstacles a person can overcome.

4-7-81



AP photo

Robert Van Etten, a 3-foot-3 dwarf from Orlando, Fla., is sworn in Monday in Washington as a \$32,048-a-year government engineer. He had been caught in the Reagan administration hiring freeze after being promised a job and moving to Washington. He appealed the action and won. At right is another new worker, Todd Buchta.

7-27-81



AP photo

Funnyman Chevy Chase gets a chance to play the big man with part of the cast of his latest film, "Under the Rainbow." Chase and veteran actor Billy Barty star in the film, which includes scores of little people. The film should be in theaters by Friday.

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"Now, can you say that: Mrs. Lamb is a little person?"

"Mrs. Lamb is a little person," the class obediently responds.

"Everybody remember that. Am I something to be afraid of?"

"No," says the class in unison.

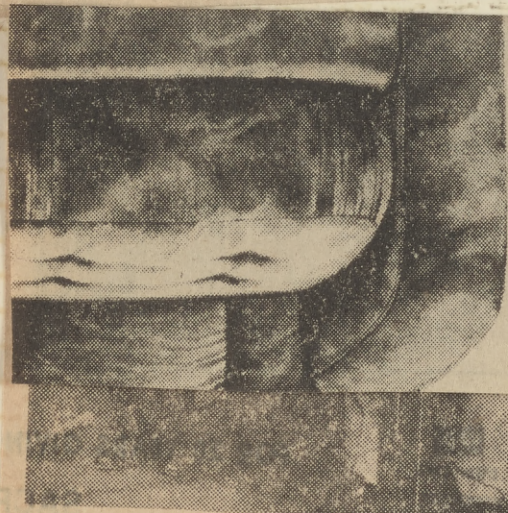
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As she continued her introduction to the class, Lamb asked: "Do you notice anything different about Mrs. Lamb?"

"You're white," said **Martin Guillory**, a student in the all-black class.



"Since I was a child, I always wanted to be a teacher," says **Lois Lamb**. "It's very important. You're laying the groundwork of their lives." Lamb says she thinks she will set an example for the class to show the obstacles a person can overcome.



AP photo

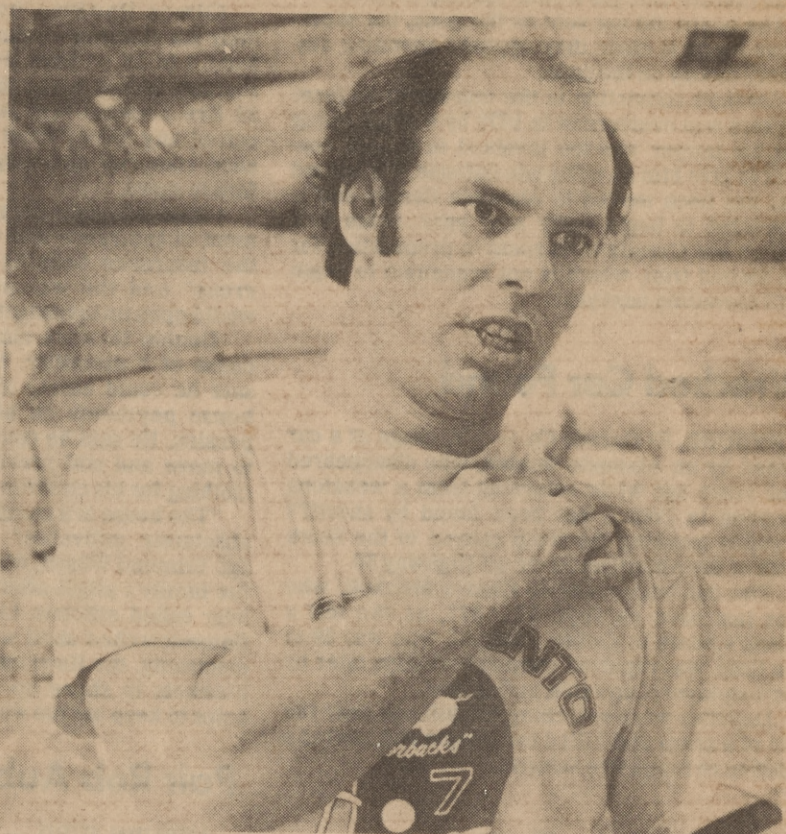
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AP photo

Funnyman **Chevy Chase** gets a chance to play the big man with part of the cast of his latest film, "Under the Rainbow." Chase and veteran actor **Billy Barty** star in the film, which includes scores of little people. The film should be in theaters by Friday.

Taking Pride



Bee photos by Harlin Smith



At upper left, John Carrell sands door panels at PRIDE workshop. Above is Robin Sisto, a handicapped employee.

At left is PRIDE's woodworking shop, the largest in the state for handicapped people.



Joe Pierce, center, and several fellow students wait for a Regional Transit bus in front of Sacramento State University.

Sacramento Union 7/23/79

Joe Pierce making his way as a dwarf in a tall world

By DON DRYSDALE
Staff Writer

Joe Pierce was almost expelled from a class at Sacramento State University last year.

Not because he was a troublemaker, or because he couldn't handle the academics, but because he was constantly late for class. He tried the best he could to walk from one end of the campus to the other in time, but more often than not, his legs couldn't move him fast enough. You see, Joe Pierce is a dwarf.

Twenty-two years of age, he is 3-foot-11 and weighs 90 pounds — an abnormality in a society where the average height of

males is about 5-foot-10. Dwarfism is generally caused by either the absence of growth hormone, or improperly-functioning cartilage cells. There are about 50 varieties of dwarfs.

"THE BIGGEST classification is the pituitary dwarf," Dr. Juanita Barrera, SSU biology instructor, said. "Pituitary dwarfs are usually called midgets. There are other types, such as primordial dwarfs — pygmies — which have normal hormones, but target tissue (in the limbs and extremities) that is not receptive to growth hormone. You can treat pituitary dwarfs by injecting them with hormones, but injections have no effect on primordi-

al dwarfs.

"I think the incident of achondroplastic dwarfs are genetic — they have a defect in the regulation of the long bones with respect to cartilage cells. That's why they're disproportioned."

Dwarfs have long been regarded as freaks, and they are indeed unusual. Popular dwarf stereotypes include characteristics like "temperamental, suspicious and malicious" or "mentally and morally handicapped." Pierce has come across all of these prejudices.

"WHEN I WAS first born," he said, "the doctors wanted to put me in an institution. They said I was mentally

retarded and tried to convince my parents that I was. Fortunately, my parents didn't want me put away. They wanted me around. They had the insight to realize that I possessed normal intelligence. They pushed me in school. Otherwise, I'd probably be somewhere basket weaving."

While most dwarfs have arms or legs that are not in proportion to their torso (midgets are proportioned, like a child, and all dwarfs are less than 4-foot-6, not all are mentally retarded. The most common prejudice Pierce has encountered is the belief that all dwarfs are mentally deficient.

"BEING PHYSICALLY handicapped goes hand-in-hand with being mentally handicapped, as far as a lot of people are concerned," Pierce said. "But there are a lot of very intelligent people with physical disabilities."

"At least in pituitary dwarfs, there is no reason for mental retardation," SSU human biology instructor Donnelle Hunter said. "They should be just as normal mentally as any other person."

Hunter's colleague, Barrera, agrees.

"Wherever the problem is growth hormone, there should be no incidental problems with mentality," Barrera said.

"If there is a prejudice against dwarfs, that they are somehow generally more apt to be mentally retarded, I would think it would be because of the connection between dwarfism and cretinism."

CRETINISM IS caused by a thyroid hormone defect and has a definite relationship to mental retardation and physical deformity.

Pierce is no cretin. A senior accounting major, he has compiled more than 100 units of credit with a "B" average. He will graduate this fall with a B.A. in accounting and a math minor.

—To B6, Col. 3



Staff Photos by Jerry Rainbolt

Simple tasks, like picking up the mail, can require a great deal of effort when you're 3-11. Here, Pierce gets a hand from Postal Service employee Chris Jovalis.

Now Mature, Dwarf Couple Recalls Difficulties of Being Different, Especially During the Teen Years

By HEIDI VAN ZANT

Kathy Norman remembers the exact moment she found out she was a dwarf.

"It was a little bit sad," she said. "I was shopping and the kids were laughing at me. I just knew I was different."

That was 30 years ago, when she was 3 years old. Today she is married to another dwarf and they have a 1½-year-old daughter, who also is a dwarf.

The couple said that over the years they have come to accept their handicap and have learned to live life as normally as possible.

"You're always going to run into somebody that is going to be critical," Mrs. Norman said, "but I've overcome a lot of the hang-ups that I've had."

Her husband, Peter, 36, said that sometimes he does feel sorry for himself, but that does not hold him back from living a normal life.

"I want to be my own person," he said. "I want to be a full human being. I want to be a husband and a father."

Peter and Kathy Norman both remember that growing up was a difficult experience because of their handicap.

"Adolescence is the really rough time," Mrs. Norman said. "I didn't have my first date until I was 24 years old."

She grew up in Menlo Park, where she attended the Convent of the Sacred Heart through high school. Mrs. Norman said she remembers having lots of girlfriends and learning how to entertain herself with sewing and drawing.

"My parents gave me a very good outlook," Mrs. Norman said. "Although they gave me positive

feelings, they didn't talk about it a lot."

Peter Norman, who grew up in Denver, said he never really was told he was a dwarf. His shortness initially had been diagnosed as a thyroid problem.

"I just thought I was shorter than normal," he said, until at 14 he realized it was more than that.

In high school he became a loner, although he said he did some dating.

"The most painful incidents are in high school," he said. "You're

extenders installed for the gas and brake pedals.

Clothes are either bought or made by Mrs. Norman. Some of their clothes are purchased in the children's department.

Before they had their daughter Kate, the Normans said they had genetic counseling and learned that there was a 75 percent chance a child of theirs would be a dwarf.

When the couple goes out in public with their daughter, Mrs. Norman said, there are more stares than ever because people want to see "what the product looks like."

The Normans said they look forward to helping Kate accept the fact that she, too, is a dwarf.

"If she feels good about herself, she won't have a lot of problems," Mrs. Norman said. "The advantage that Kate has is that she's the same way we are."

"I'm really glad that I had a dwarf child," she added. "It'll be easier to raise one."

When asked what it is like to be a dwarf, Mrs. Norman said, "It's a combination of very difficult and alright."

She is used to the stares and questions. When a child makes a comment, Mrs. Norman said she frequently will stop to explain that some people have handicaps.

"Kids say neat things," she said, recalling the time she was asked if she was a grown-up child.

But of course, not all comments are kind. Some days, Mrs. Norman does not feel up to going out in public because of the attention she knows she will receive.

"There are times when I might have had a bad day and I just don't feel like coping," she said.

Peter Norman said he has learned to deal more positively with the comments made about him and also will sometimes stop to explain to children that he is a dwarf.

"It's not a big thing to me," he said. "The comments don't affect me anymore."

Although Norman said he is not afraid of going out in public, he did

The Times Peninsula

constantly feeling somewhat out of place and trying to fit in."

The Normans met each other through an organization for dwarfs called Little People of America, a club in which no member can be taller than 4-foot-10.

Peter Norman is 4 feet 8; his wife is 4 feet 4.

The club has 2,000 members nationwide, Mrs. Norman said, adding there are about 100 members from the Bay Area who meet monthly.

The Normans married six years ago and now live in Burlingame.

Their home has been modified only slightly for their height. A few of the chairs are shorter, the baby's dressing table is lower and a stool is handy in the kitchen to give Kathy Norman access to the sink and cupboards.

Peter Norman drives a regular car and his wife has had special



LIVING A NORMAL FAMILY LIFE IN BURLINGAME

Kathy and Peter Norman and their daughter Kate.

admit "there is a certain nervousness" within himself when he does.

A strange thing for him, he said, is that in Little People of America

he is one of the taller members. His CB handle is "Little Big Man."

The San Carlos electronics technician said that sometimes it is hard

to find a dwarf who can

Mary Vinc
whose arm
elbow by
newsmen
Los Angel



GOING OUT IN PUBLIC CAN SOMETIMES BE TOUGH

Mrs. Norman says there're days when she doesn't feel like coping with the stares and questions.



Although comfortable talking to normal-sized fellow students, Pierce can't always get comfortable in the chairs at one of his favorite Sacramento State University hangouts.

Sunday, September 30, 1979

He's Too Short For The Law

Burton Gutterman, 27, claims his application to become a Boston police officer was turned down because he is a 4-foot, 3-inch dwarf. He is selling pencils on the steps of the Massachusetts Statehouse to protest the height discrimination.

His sign reads, "Gov.(Edward J.) King and his high paid professionals offer me welfare not work — living with a broken promise."



UPI photo

Sat May 17 1980



Bound For Sacramento

Identical twins John and Greg Rice (or is it Greg and John?) will be the featured speakers at Bohannon Realtors' monthly awards breakfast at the Sacramento Inn Oct. 10. The twins, who stand only three feet tall, made it big their first full year in

real estate in Florida, selling 57 homes. They have appeared on television and now tour the country as motivational speakers. More than 200 sales agents are expected to attend the awards function.



The Associated Press

Little People conventioners give themselves a cheer in 'the biggest little city in the world'

The Little People stand table-tall at Reno convention

RENO, Nev. (AP) — Engineers, actors, attorneys and hundreds of others who stand no higher than a hotel reception desk gathered here to celebrate the 25th year of an organization that teaches little people they too can think big.

Harrah's hotel-casino built a platform at one craps table. And, so the 650 people who came from all over the nation to the Little People of America convention could reach the elevator buttons, the hotel provided rubber-tipped wands.

There was dancing for teen-agers, softball, a basketball game and time for sightseeing at the anniversary meeting this week. And there were workshops on genetics, jobs, schools and clothing.

Another royal wedding

"The royal couple" of little people were married in a ceremony the groom said was like others "except there's more little people and a lot of love."

Bobby Van Etten, 32, the president of Little People of America, Saturday married Angela Muir, 28, the past president of Little People of New Zealand, in Hobe Sound, Fla.

The hour-long ceremony was the second time at the altar for the couple, who both stand 3-foot-4. The first was held Oct. 31 in New Zealand for the bride's relatives.

"We call them our royal couple," said Ed Lang, Van Etten's best man and publisher of the Little People of America newsletter. "Prince Bobby and Lady Angela. Now the sun never sets on little people."

TEORIA
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